

A NOTE ON THE HISTORY OF THE STATUTES OF THE  
SOCIETY.

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The following note was drawn up for the use of the Council of the Society while preparing the foregoing revised edition of the Statutes :—

THE FIRST STATUTES.

**Ann. 1663.** The second Charter, amending the first granted in 1662, having been granted April 22nd, 1663, the Statutes were drawn up in that year. A copy of these is published in Weld's "History of the Royal Society."

THE STATUTES FROM 1663 TO 1752.

During the succeeding ninety years changes were from time to time made in the Statutes; but no new version of the Statutes appears to have been drawn up until the year 1752.\*

"The laws of the Royal Society, like those of other communities, were altered from time to time, until they appeared sufficient to embrace every contingency that might occur, while they held their meetings in Gresham College, which they continued to do for near the space of fifty years. But the arrangement of the Society's affairs being somewhat altered upon possessing a house of their own, it became necessary to make different establishments in many particulars and to alter and augment some of their Statutes. However, the greater part of them was still left in the original form, suited to the situation of the Society at Gresham College."—(Preface to Statutes, Edition of 1776.)

Between 1663 and 1752, the following seem to have been the most important changes.

*The Election of Fellows.*

**Ann. 1663.** In the original Statutes, Cap. VI., "Of the Election and Admission of Fellows," Sec. 1 provides that candidates be propounded at one meeting, and put to the vote at some other

\* The British Museum contains a small 8vo. edition, dated 1728, but this appears to be a verbatim copy of the Statutes of 1663, except that Cap. VI., Sec. 7, begins with the words "The admission of," instead of "The election and admission of."

meeting at which twenty-one Fellows (as prescribed by Charter) are present; but that every one of his Majesty's subjects having the title and place of Baron, or any higher title and place, and every one of his Majesty's Privy Council, may be propounded and put to the vote the same day. And Sec. 3 of the same chapter provides that "the name of every person propounded as a Candidate, together with the name of the Fellow proposing, shall be entered in the Journal-book;" by which it appears that "propounding" by *one* Fellow was sufficient.

**Ann. 1682.** In 1682, however, the following was proposed on August 2, and passed on August 5:—

"The Statute for Election of Fellows having by long Experience been found insufficient for bringing in persons qualified for the ends of the Institution of the Royal Society, few balloting in the negative and presuming the person to be well known to the Member that Proposeth the Candidate, it is thought requisite by the Councell to propose this Statute following;—

"Every person that would propose a Candidate shall first give in his Name to some of the Councell, that so in the next Councell it may be discoursed *viva voce* whether the person is known to be so qualified as in probability to be usefull to the Society. And if the Councell return no other Answer but that they desire further time to be acquainted with the gentleman proposed, the Proposer is to take that for an Answer. And if they are well assured that the Candidate may be usefull to the Society then the Candidate shall be proposed at the next meeting of the Society and ballotted according to the Statute in that behalf, and shall immediately sign the usual Bond and pay his admission mony upon his Admission."

(Neither the Statutes of 1663, nor the Edition of 1752, make any mention of the "Bond for the payment of the contribution;" the words first occur in the Edition of 1776, but the actual Bonds preserved in the Archives of the Society date from January 1, 1674, onwards.)

**Ann. 1727.** In 1727 (January 9th) the following Statute was passed, that of 1682 being apparently repealed:—

"Every Person to be Elected Fellow of the Society shall first at a Meeting of the Society be propounded as a Candidate to be approved by the Council, and shall be recommended by three members, one of which at least shall be a member of the Council, and one of them shall at the same Time mention and specify the qualifications of the said Candidate. And afterwards such Person shall at another meeting of the Society (whereat there shall be a competent Number for making Elections) be refered back from the Council if approved, and shall then be propounded and put to the Vote for Election, Saving and Excepting that it shall be free for every one of his Majesties Subjects who is a Peer or the Son of a Peer of Great Britain or Ireland, and for every one of his Majesties Privy Council of either of the said kingdoms to

be propounded by any single Person and to be put to the Vote for Election on the same Day, there being present a competent Number for making Elections."

Ann. 1730. This, however, was in turn, very soon, viz., in 1730, changed to the following form, all mention of Council being omitted from the Statute:—

"X. Every person to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, shall be propounded and recommended at a meeting of the Society by three or more Members; who shall then deliver to one of the Secretaries a paper, signed by themselves with their own names, specifying the name, addition, profession, occupation, and chief qualifications; the inventions, discoveries, works, writings, or other productions of the candidate for Election; as also notifying the usual place of his habitation.

"A fair copy of which paper, with the date of the day when delivered, shall be fixed up in the common meeting room of the Society at ten several ordinary meetings, before the said candidate shall be put to the ballot: Saving and excepting, that it shall be free for every one of his Majesty's subjects, who is a Peer or the Son of a Peer of Great Britain or Ireland, and for every one of his Majesty's Privy council of either of the said Kingdoms, and for every foreign Prince or Ambassador, to be propounded by any single person, and to be put to the ballot for Election on the same day, there being present a competent number for making Elections."

It appears in this form in the Edition of 1752 as Sec. 10 of Cap. VI.

*The Admission of Fellows.*

Ann. 1727. In 1727, also on January 9th, the two following Statutes were enacted:—

"II. Every Person who is a Foreigner and every one of his Majesties Subjects whose habitation or usual place of residence is at more than forty miles distance from London, shall be and be deemed as a Fellow of the Society immediately after he shall be Elected, and shall be registered in the Journal Book of the Society as such: Provided always, that no such person shall have liberty to Vote at any Election or meeting of the Society before he shall be qualified pursuant to the Statutes. And if he shall neglect so to qualify himself the first time he comes to London when he may be present at a meeting of the Society and can be admitted; his Election shall be declared Void, and his Name shall be cancelled in the Register.

"III. No Person shall be Proposed, Elected, or Admitted a Fellow of the Society upon St. Andrew's Day or the Day of the Anniversary meeting for Electing the Council and Officers."

These appear in the Edition of 1752 as Secs. 8 and 9 respectively of Cap. VI.

As far, then, as the election and admission of Fellows are concerned, no new Statutes were enacted in 1752; the Edition of that year simply adds to the Statutes of 1663 the two enacted in 1727 and the one enacted in 1730.

*The Election of Council and Officers.*

**Ann. 1663.** In the original Statutes, Cap. VII., "Of the Election of the Council and Officers" makes arrangements that the eleven members of the existing Council who are to be continued should first be determined, after that the ten new members, and finally the officers. The Statutes of 1752, reproduce the chapter in its original

**Ann. 1735.** form of 12 sections, with the addition of Sec. 13, enacted in 1735, which provides that in order to lessen the tediousness of the election, Fellows may give in *at the same time* three lists—(1) of 11 old Members of Council to continue, (2) of 10 new Members, (3) of Officers.

*The Philosophical Transactions.*

But the most important changes introduced in 1752, those which probably led to the issue of the new version of the Statutes in that year,

**Ann. 1663.** relate to the Philosophical Transactions. In the old Statutes, Cap. XIII., "Of the Printer to the Society," provides for the printing and binding of books, catalogues, and such other things by order of the Society or Council; there are no other provisions as

**Ann. 1665.** to publications. The Philosophical Transactions were begun in 1665; but up to the 46th volume inclusive, published in 1749-50, "the printing of them was always, from time to time, the single act of the respective Secretaries" (Adv. to Philosophical Transactions, vol. 47), though with regard to the first number the Council (Minutes, March 1, 1664) ordered "that the Philosophical Transactions, to be composed by Mr. Oldenburg, be printed the first Munday of every month, if he have sufficient matter for it, and that that Tract be licensed by the Council of the Society, being first reviewed by some of the Members of the same. And that the President be desired, now to Licence the first papers thereof, being written in four sheets in folio, to be printed by John Martyn and James Allestree," and this practice of licensing was continued with reference to those papers read before the Society which were published in the Transactions.

**Ann. 1752.** In 1752 it was determined to place the Philosophical Transactions directly in the hands of the Council, and the Edition of the Statutes of 1752, while leaving Cap. XIII. intact, adds the following two new chapters, enacted March 26th of that year:—

Cap. XX. "Of the selecting of Papers laid before the Society, in order for Publication," establishes and lays down regulations for the "Committee of Papers." These regulations are almost verbatim the same as Secs. 1 to 4 of Cap. XIII., "Of the Publication of Papers," of the Statutes in force at the present time, except that the Quorum of the Committee of Papers is five, not seven, and a provision is contained that no entry in the Minute-book of the Committee is to be made of Papers "thought improper to be laid before the public."

In the Statute in its original form the Committee "shall be at liberty to call in to their assistance . . . any other members of the Society who are knowing and well skilled in any particular branch of Science that shall happen to be the subject-matter of any paper which shall be then to come under their deliberation," and almost the same words are retained in the Statutes at present in force. The custom of the Committee is now, and for a long time has been, to "call in to their assistance" two or more Fellows, by asking for written reports, and such Fellows so assisting are generally spoken of as "referees." The earliest mention which has been found in the Society's records of a

paper being "referred" is on May 25th, 1780, when a  
**Ann. 1780.** paper by Mr. Ludlow was "referred" to Mr. Cavendish and Dr. Hutton. There does not appear to be a similar record until

March 21st, 1831, when a paper by Prof. Davy was  
**Ann. 1831.** referred to Mr. Faraday. By 1832, however, the practice of referring papers seems to have become very common. For some time the name of the person (or persons) to whom the paper was referred is stated in the Minutes of the Committee of Papers, and in all these cases, including those just mentioned, the persons in question were members of the then Council. Very soon, however, the name was omitted, the entry being simply "referred." There seems to be no means of ascertaining when "referees" outside the Council were first had recourse to, or when the practice of written reports first began.

Cap. XXI. "Of the Manner of Publication of the Papers laid before the Society, and defraying the Expenses thereof," provides for the printing and distribution of the Philosophical Transactions, and is to a large extent, even in its very words, the same as Secs. 5 to 9 of Cap. XIII. of the Statutes at present in force, the word "Clerk" being used where "Assistant Secretary" is now used.

#### *Payments by Fellows.*

In order to defray the additional expenses thus incurred by the publication and gratis distribution to the Fellows of the Philosophical Transactions, the "admission-money" is by Sec. 2 of Cap. XXI. raised from two guineas to five guineas. In Cap. III. of the Statutes of 1663,

"Of the Payments by the Fellows to the Society," the admission-money is fixed at forty shillings, and indeed, in the Edition of 1752, the same sum of forty shillings is retained in this Chapter, the error apparently escaping notice. The change from forty shillings to forty-two shillings (two guineas) seems to have taken place at some time in the interval.

#### THE STATUTES FROM 1752 TO 1776.

In 1774 and 1775, the Council were engaged in considering the Statutes, and in 1776 published a new Edition, containing several important changes. An interesting preface to this Edition (from which a quotation is given above), explains that in spite of large changes in the practices of the Society, the Statutes had been kept as far as possible in their original form; and, indeed, the Statutes of 1752 differ from those of 1663 chiefly in the additions described above. In 1776, however, the Council determined to bring the Statutes into more strict conformity with the practice of the Society, and in consequence the Edition of 1776 differs widely from the two earlier versions.

Five whole chapters are omitted, viz., V,—Of Experiments, and the Reports thereof; XI, Of Curators by Office; XIII, Of the Printer to the Society; XIV, Of Operators to the Society; XVII, Of Benefactors; the 21 chapters of 1752 being thus reduced to 16. The preface explains how the changes in the Society had long rendered these Statutes unnecessary.

The order of the several chapters is largely altered, the new arrangement adopted being that which has on the whole been followed in subsequent editions, and is still maintained.

#### *The Election of Fellows.*

**Ann. 1776.** The regulations for the election of Fellows remain on the whole the same, save that it is precisely stated that twenty-one is "the competent number" for making an election, a majority of two-thirds being necessary, and in the Statute relating to what we now call the "privileged class," the words "Foreign Prince or Ambassador" are replaced by the words "Foreign Sovereign Prince, or the son of a Sovereign Prince, or an Ambassador to the Court of Great Britain."

#### *Composition Fee.*

In the Edition of 1752, as stated above, no mention is made of any "bond" or "composition fee," but in the next year, 1753 (June 7), the Statute, Cap. VI., Sec. 8, concerning Foreigners and persons residing more than forty miles from London, was repealed, and the following substituted:—

“That no one of his Majesties subjects, or any other person residing in his Majesties Dominions, who shall be elected a Fellow of the Society, shall be deemed an actual Fellow thereof, nor shall the name of any such person be Registered in the Journal Book, or printed in the List of Fellows of the Society, until such Person shall have paid his admission Fee, and given the usual Bond, or paid the Sum of Twenty-one pounds for the use of the Society in lieu of contributions: But that upon such payment or giving Bond as aforesaid, it shall be lawful for the Society to give leave for the name of any such person so elected as aforesaid to be entered in the Journal Book, and printed in the list of Fellows of the Society: Provided always that no such person shall have liberty to Vote at any Election or Meeting of the Society, before he shall be duly admitted a Fellow thereof pursuant to the former Statute.”

This is the first time that the Statutes contain any reference to a composition fee.

**Ann. 1766.** In 1766 (December 11) a Statute was passed increasing the composition fee from twenty to twenty-six guineas; and the Statute of 1753 just quoted re-appears, with some slight changes, in the Edition of 1776 as Sec. 8 of Cap. I., the “sum of twenty-one pounds” being altered into “the sum appointed,” and this the Chapter on payments by Fellows states to be twenty-six guineas.

### *Foreign Members.*

The Statutes of 1776 contain, what the Statutes of 1752 and 1663 do not, special regulations for Fellows “residing in foreign parts and not subjects of the British Dominions.”

**Ann. 1664.** So early as 1664 (Ap. 13) a Statute was passed providing that persons “residing in Forraigne parts,” who are elected

**Ann. 1716.** Fellows, should not pay fees; in 1716 a reference occurs to

**Ann. 1737.** Foreigners who are Fellows; and in 1737 a resolution of Council (which did not become a Statute) proposed that Foreigners resident in London might be on the Home List if they paid contributions. It would appear, therefore, in spite of no mention of the matter being made in 1752, that, from an early period, a distinction was made between Fellows who were Foreigners and others, and that the Fellows who were Foreigners did not, of necessity, pay contributions to the Society. In the Register of Fellows, however, at this date no distinction of any kind is made.

It was apparently soon felt that the Foreign Members were too numerous and in some cases not of sufficient distinction; for

**Ann. 1761.** in 1761 (March 19) the Council, in order to ensure that “no persons residing in Foreign parts, not being subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, be elected Fellows unless their Qualifica-

tions be very well known as well abroad as at home," enacted a Statute providing that in the case of such persons the certificate should be signed by at least "three Foreign Fellows," as well as at least "by

three Fellows named in the Home List." And in 1765  
**Ann. 1765.** (Dec. 19) on a proposal "to restrain the number of foreign

members," it was resolved "that no foreigner be proposed for election that is not known to the learned world, by some publication or invention which may enable the Society to form a judgment of his merit, and that till the number of foreign members be reduced to eighty, not more than two shall be admitted in one year." A special mode of procedure in the election of foreigners as Fellows was, at the same time, resolved upon, providing for the election of two a year; and a subsequent resolution (Dec. 26) provides that Foreign Members paying contributions shall "have their names printed in an alphabetical List next after that of the Home Members, as Foreign Members\* contributing towards the expenses of the Society," and so distinct from "other foreign members" "who do not contribute." On January 16

**Ann. 1766.** of the next year the limitation to eighty was withdrawn, and the above resolutions were then embodied in the form of Statutes. These at the same time provided that the new regulation should not extend to Foreign Princes or their sons, and gave permission to foreigners resident in Great Britain to become Fellows in the usual

**Ann. 1769.** way, which permission was extended on Jan. 26, 1769, to foreigners who had been resident in Great Britain for the

**Ann. 1773.** space of six months. Soon after, namely on June 10th, 1773, the word "Foreigner" appears in the "Register" for the first time, being placed after the names of Stehelin, Le Roy, and Le Duc; thenceforward it is used frequently.

In the Edition of 1776 these regulations, in a somewhat  
**Ann. 1776.** modified form, are introduced as part of Sec. 8 of Cap. I.; the limitation to the election of two a year is omitted, and the certificates, signed by at least three Fellows upon the Foreign List, and at least by three Fellows on the Home List, are directed to be suspended from the 30th November until the weekly Meeting on, or next after,

the 30th May. Some years afterwards, however (March 8,  
**Ann. 1787.** 1787), this part of Sec. 8 was repealed, and a new Sec. 9 added, which provides a somewhat complex mode of procedure in the election, under the title of "Foreign Members," † of persons "who are neither natives nor inhabitants of his Majesty's dominions." The number is limited to one hundred. Certificates signed by six or more Fellows are to be presented at some meeting between Easter and the Anniver-

\* It may be remarked that in the early records of the Society the words "Member" and "Fellow" appear to be used indiscriminately.

† Foreign *Member* as distinguished from *Fellow*. In the edition of 1776 and thenceforward the term *Member*, as applied to an ordinary Fellow, is never used.



sary. At a meeting immediately before the following Easter a selection of candidates is to be made, and the candidates so selected are to be balloted for at the next meeting immediately after Easter. These regulations are not, however, to apply to Sovereign Foreign Princes or their Sons, or to such Foreigners resident in Great Britain as may desire to become Fellows in the usual way.

*The Officers of the Society, the Clerk, Librarian, &c.*

No changes are made in the Statutes of 1776 for the election of Council and Officers; but to meet the changes in the contributions there are changes in the regulations for the Treasurer. There are also changes in the duties of the Secretaries, chiefly in reference to the Clerk and to the publication of the Philosophical Transactions.

Cap. X. provides regulations for the qualifications, mode of election, duties and remunerations of the Clerk, the Librarian, the Keeper of the Repository, and the House-Keeper.

**Ann. 1663.** The Statutes of 1663 contain regulations for the Clerk, and prescribe clerkly duties for him; and the Society had at first neither House-keeper nor Librarian.

**Ann. 1710.** When in 1710 the Society moved to Crane Court, the office of House-Keeper was established; but the then Clerk was made House-Keeper. As the Library and Repository were increased the offices of Librarian and Keeper of the Repository were established; but both these offices were held by the Clerk, under supervision, during a certain period at all events, of Fellows chosen for that duty under the title of "Inspectors." But the Statutes of 1752 contain no regulations for these offices other than that of the Clerk, the Statutes concerning whom remain exactly the same as in 1663; and in spite of the special regulations present in the edition of 1776, it appears

**Ann. 1776.** that the Society had never more than one officer to carry out these several duties, and that he was called "the Clerk," until at a later period (1823) the office of Clerk was abolished,

**Ann. 1823.** and that of Assistant Secretary instituted.

*The Ordinary Meetings of the Society.*

**Ann. 1776.** In the edition of 1776, Cap. XI. "Of the Ordinary Meetings of the Society," Sec. 1 provides that the ordinary Meetings should be held on "Thursdays, beginning at 6 p.m., and continue about an hour, as usual, at the discretion of the President."

**Ann. 1769.** This Statute was passed in 1769.

**Ann. 1663.** The Statutes of 1663 (IV., Sec. 1) provide that the ordinary meetings should be held on "Wednesday, beginning about three of the clock in the afternoon, and continuing until

six, unless the major part of the Fellows present shall, for that time, resolve to rise sooner, or sit later." And the Statutes of Ann. 1752. 1752 reproduce exactly the Statute (IV. Sec. 1) of 1663. Nevertheless, the records of the Society show that the day and hour of the ordinary meeting were more than once changed in the interval, as they have been since. The following shows the changes and their respective dates up to the present time:—

1663.	On Wednesdays,	at 2 p.m.
July 1, 1663,	changed to Wednesday,	3 to 6 p.m.
Feb. 5, 1666	„ Thursday	at 3 p.m.
April 10, 1672	„ Wednesday.	
Oct. 30, 1674	„ Thursday	at 3 p.m.
Dec. 8, 1690	„ Wednesday	„ 4 „
March 1, 1710	„ Thursday	„ 4 „
April 20, 1769	„ Thursday	„ 6 „
June 15, 1780	„ Thursday	„ 8 „
(?) 1831	„ Thursday	„ 8.30 p.m.*
Feb. 19, 1880	„ Thursday	„ 4.30 „

Ann. 1831. The first Statute enacting that no meeting should be held on certain days or in certain weeks was passed in 1831; previously to that the Statutes simply said "upon Wednesday," or "upon Thursday." But the practice of having an Autumn recess was of much older date than this; moreover, the Journal Book shows that from the earliest times it was customary to hold no meetings on Ash Wednesday and certain other holy days, and that in particular no meeting was held on the anniversary of the death of Charles I. In 1661 the Journal Book omits the date, January 30, without remark, although a meeting was due upon that day. On January 30, 1666, the Minute appears, "This day being the Anniversary Fast-Day, there was no Meeting of the Society." In 1667, the entry is, "The Society met not, because of the solemn Fast." Similar entries occur in subsequent years, the last being on January 30, 1834. After this date the custom was omitted.

*The Admission of Strangers to the Meetings of the Society.*

Ann. 1752. In the Statutes of 1752, any of his Majesty's subjects having the title and place of a Baron, or having any higher title or place, are permitted to be present at the Meetings of the Society, "with the allowance of the President;" other persons may attend "upon leave obtained of the President and Fellows present."

\* Careful search has failed to show when this change was made, but it was probably about this time.

**Ann. 1776.** In 1776 the mention of titled persons is omitted, and the Statute simply provides for "strangers" being present.

**Ann. 1784** Some years later, viz., in 1784, a new section was added to Cap. XI. as follows:—

"VI. That the meetings of the Society may not be wasted by unprofitable debates, contrary to the intent and meaning of the fifth section of this chapter, it is constituted, established, and ordained, that every motion or question, proposed to be ballotted for by the Society, shall be fairly transcribed on paper, and being signed by six or more Fellows of the Society, it shall be by them delivered to one of the Secretaries at a meeting of the Society; and shall thereupon be read immediately after the declaration of the Presents on the table; and after being marked by the Secretary with the date of the day when delivered, it shall be fixed up in the common Meeting-room of the Society at the next ordinary Meeting; and on the Meeting next following the same, it shall be put to the Ballot, unless those who have signed it agree to withdraw it.

"But nothing contained in this Statute is to be construed to extend to matters relative to elections, or the ordinary business of the Society."

The motions or questions proposed to be "ballotted for" must therefore have had reference to matters of science.

*Publications, Records, and Library.*

**Ann. 1776.** In Cap. XII., the quorum of the Committee of Papers is raised from five to seven, and the part of the Statute providing that there should be no entry of rejected papers is omitted.

**Ann. 1776.** In Cap. XIII., "Of the Manner of Publication of the Papers laid before the Society," the word "Librarian" is substituted for that of "Clerk"; also the period during which surplus copies not required by Fellows must remain before they are disposed of by the Council, is extended from one year (as in 1752) to five years.

**Ann. 1776.** Cap. XIV., "Of the Books and Papers of the Society," differs somewhat from the corresponding Cap. XVI., "Of the Books of the Society," in the Statutes of 1752. The copy of Statutes, the List of Benefactors, and the Register of Fellows is omitted from the Charter Book.\* The Statute concerning the Register

\* The Charter Book never did contain, as provided by the Statute, the Register of Fellows, but only their signatures. The Society possesses, however, a volume now called "The Register," which contains the names, with dates of election, of all the Fellows from the foundation of the Society up to the year 1875. Since that date the Register is continued in a second volume.

Books, containing accounts of observations, experiments, &c., and the Statute concerning the Book of Letters, are omitted.

**Ann. 1776.** A new Statute (Sec. V.) is introduced, to the effect that the original copy of every paper read at the Society shall be considered as the property of the Society; and another (Sec. VI.) provides for the care of the papers read. And, lastly, a new Statute (Sec. VII.) introduces, for the first time, into the Statutes regulations concerning the use of the Library. The Library is to be open Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Fellows may, by leave of the Society or of the Council, take out four volumes for six weeks. If these are printed books, the Fellow gives merely his note; if MSS., a bond of £50 for each.

### THE STATUTES FROM 1776 TO 1847.

#### *The Statutes of 1819.*

The next edition appears to be that of 1819; it is, however, merely a reprint of that of 1776, with the additions of Cap. I., Sec. 9, as to Foreign Members, and Cap. XI., Sec. 6, as to the conduct of ordinary meetings, mentioned above (p. 508 and p. 511).

#### *The Statutes of 1823.*

**Foreign Members,**  
limited to fifty,  
selected by Council. In the next edition—that of 1823—several important changes are introduced. The number of Foreign Members is limited to fifty; and “they are to be put in nomination as candidates at a meeting of the Council,” instead of the previous complex procedure. The regulations for the election of the Council and officers are much simplified, but not materially altered.

**Foreign Secretary.** A new Statute, Cap. IX., Sec 4, institutes a new office, that of the “Secretary for Foreign Correspondence.” Since 1719 the proceeds of the bequest of Mr. Robert Keck had been “bestowed on some one of the Fellows,” appointed “to carry on a foreign correspondence,” but the Fellow performing these duties was appointed by Council at their pleasure, and was styled Assistant to the Secretaries. The new Secretary for Foreign Correspondence was to rank with the two Principal Secretaries.

**Assistant Secretary.** The office of Clerk is abolished, and that of Assistant Secretary created. The old Statute relating to the Clerk is, in consequence, largely modified. The Assistant Secretary is made Librarian and Housekeeper, but all mention of the Keeper of the Repository disappears from the Statutes. The facilities for using the Library are increased. The annual contribution is raised from “a shilling a week,” or thirteen shillings a quarter, to “one pound a quarter,” the admission fee from five guineas

to ten pounds, and the composition fee from twenty-six guineas to forty pounds.

*The Statutes of 1831.*

The edition of 1831\* contains a few changes which are of no great moment, and chiefly refer to payments (Cap. III.), the "bond" being omitted.

In 1831 the Statutes relating to the Assistant Secretary were amended, the separate regulations for Librarian and Housekeeper being omitted; and, in 1835, the then existing Statute, Cap. I., Sec. 5 (enacted in 1831), that "no election for Fellows, or for Foreign Members, shall take place excepting on the first ordinary meetings of the Society in December, February, April, and June" was repealed.

*The Statutes of 1840.*

In the next edition, 1840, the most notable change concerns the election of Officers and Council. These are to be put in nomination by the President and Council, according to the plan at present in use. A new Chapter, "Of Special General Meetings of the Society" is added. The composition fee is raised to sixty pounds in the case of Fellows elected after Dec. 11, 1834, except such as have contributed papers to the Philosophical Transactions; the Statutes concerning publications are thrown into one Chapter; and some slight changes are made in the Statutes concerning the Treasurer and Secretaries. Cap. XI., "Of the ordinary Meetings of the Society," provides for the recess from the third Thursday in June to the third Thursday in November, and as mentioned above, for the omission of meetings on certain days.

With the important exception of those relating to the election of Fellows, the Statutes of this edition are very like those at present in force.

*The Statutes of 1847.*

Very soon after, however, viz., in 1846, a Committee of Council was appointed to consider the mode of Election of Fellows, with the result that in 1847 new Statutes were enacted, regulating the Election of fifteen Fellows annually, according to the plan at present in use. These Statutes mark an epoch in the history of the Society.

\* One form of this Edition is simply a reprint of that of 1823, with an Appendix of amended Statutes.

*The Changes from 1847 to 1888.*

The most notable changes which have since then been enacted or proposed are as follows:—

On November 3rd, 1864, the repeal of the Statute relating to the admission of strangers to the meetings was moved, but negatived; and again, on March 21st, 1867, a proposal that the public be admitted to the Ordinary Meetings of the Society was negatived.

In 1865 the privileged class (Cap. I., Sec. 4) was extended to include *Foreign Sovereign Princes* and their sons.

In 1866 the practice of paying for a proportional part of the year was abolished, and the annual payment was made one in advance.

In 1871 a new Statute was enacted prohibiting the payment of dividends to Fellows.

On October 30th, 1873, upon a motion to assimilate the mode of election of the Privileged Class to that of Ordinary Fellows, to place in the hands of the Council the selection of such candidates, and to require "evidence of ascertained special power and disposition to forward the aims of the Society from exceptional, personal, or official advantages of position, or of great eminence in any branch of learning, instead of any qualification based only on accident of lineage or of political status," the Statute concerned was referred to the consideration of a Committee, and on April 23rd, 1874, the Statute in its existing form was enacted.

On December 17th of same year, 1874, a Committee was appointed to consider the election of candidates for Fellowship, which Committee presented on November 30th, 1875, a long report giving reasons why no changes should be made.

In 1878-9 changes were made in the payment of fees.

In 1879 the Statutes relating to Foreign Members were altered to their present form.

In 1880 (February 19th) the hour of meeting was changed from the evening to the afternoon.

In 1885 the time during which the Library is open to Fellows was extended.

In 1888 the Statute, Cap. XI., Sec. 2, was altered to admit of an Ordinary Meeting being held on the day of Election of Fellows, and Statute, Cap. XIII., Sec. 7, was altered to allow Fellows to receive their copies of the Philosophical Transactions upon a request in writing.

In drawing up the above note I have been greatly assisted by the Assistant Secretary.

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## APPENDIX.

*Number of Fellows from 1700 to 1890.*

From 1700 to 1739, the numbers can be ascertained for certain years only. From 1740 to 1820, the numbers at the decades only are given.

The numbers are exclusive of Foreign Members, and the figures indicate the number of Fellows alive on the Anniversary Meeting of the year.

1701	..	125	1823	..	674	1857	..	658
1702	..	131	1824	..	678	1858	..	647
1703	..	127	1825	..	678	1859	..	637
1704	..	136	1826	..	693	1860	..	621
1705	..	138	1827	..	679	1861	..	607
1706	..	146	1828	..	673	1862	..	606
1708	..	149	1829	..	670	1863	..	602
1710	..	148	1830	..	691	1864	..	599
1711	..	152	1831	..	695	1865	..	586
1712	..	158	1832	..	692	1866	..	572
1713	..	160	1833	..	690	1867	..	564
1714	..	165	1834	..	715	1868	..	548
1715	..	162	1835	..	735	1869	..	544
1716	..	159	1836	..	737	1870	..	544
1717	..	161	1837	..	730	1871	..	542
1720	..	195	1838	..	734	1872	..	535
1721	..	194	1839	..	749	1873	..	524
1724	..	222	1840	..	751	1874	..	525
1731	..	268	1841	..	769	1875	..	515
1734	..	272	1842	..	762	1876	..	511
1735	..	279	1843	..	769	1877	..	505
1736	..	282	1844	..	762	1878	..	501
1738	..	295	1845	..	767	1879	..	488
			1846	..	779	1880	..	486
1740	..	301	1847	..	768	1881	..	480
1750	..	348	1848	..	751	1882	..	477
1760	..	344	1849	..	748	1883	..	473
1770	..	378	1850	..	736	1884	..	468
1780	..	471	1851	..	720	1885	..	465
1790	..	493	1852	..	707	1886	..	464
1800	..	529	1853	..	701	1887	..	465
1810	..	547	1854	..	688	1888	..	469
1820	..	649	1855	..	671	1889	..	466
1821	..	675	1856	..	661	1890	..	463
1822	..	686						